

Statement of Charles Robert (Bob) Simpson
Statement dictated on 8/24/2016, 6:55 p.m.
Written 8/25/2016, 11:30 a.m.

The following events happened just before 6:00 pm, on August 24, 2016. I was in the left seat of N65647. My instructor, Chad Raney, was in the right seat. We had just landed on runway 24 and been given clearance to taxi back to AFI, the flight school, via taxiway A. I was at the controls. I turned off taxiway A and followed the yellow line toward the flight school. Chad Raney had just instructed me to go to the fuel island, located just in front of the AFI flight school.

At this point, I was on the yellow guidance line, at approximately the culvert that runs through the tarmac, with our nose pointed at the center of the chain link fence bordering the parking lot. There was a loud bang. An instant later, I saw in front of me, at about the 2:00 o'clock position, an airplane, in an uncoordinated attitude, nose to the left, tail slightly elevated, sliding away from me just above head level. It was moving at a high rate of speed. It clipped a couple of other aircraft and then struck the tarmac. It skidded past the fuel island and on toward the aluminum hangar, still at my 2:00 o'clock position. I watched as it struck the hangar.

Chad Raney stated, "I have the controls" and he moved our airplane to the left, away from the fuel island, and stopped thirty yards away, in front of the chain link fence that borders the parking lot to the AFI flight school. Chad shut down the engine and we both exited the plane.

At that point, I ran to the downed plane at the hangar. One or more people were there with fire extinguishers. There was a hole punched in the right side of the hangar door big enough to get through and I shouted asking if everyone was out. Eric (I don't have his last name, and I believe that is his first name) was the passenger in the plane. I stepped inside the hangar, through the hole, and moved twenty feet over to the plane. I extended my hand to Eric. He grabbed my forearm after he had risen under his own power and stepped out of the plane. At least one other person was standing to my right at this time, but I don't have a recollection of who it was, or if there was more than one person. The engine had been pulled off and right and back, so that it sat behind what had been the passenger seat area of the plane. There was a wire that was coiled much like an extended telephone cord, and Eric stepped over this and other mangled pieces as he stepped away from the plane. Things appeared to be leaking and dripping. Fire retardant of a purplish color had been sprayed over most surfaces I could see, but I didn't want to linger. At that point, we both got out of the hangar, back through the hole punched in the hangar door.

I ran back to N65647. I grabbed my phone and took a 2:32 video of the site, which I will make available upon request.

This is the end of my statement, dated 8/25/2016


Charles Robert Simpson